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New Literary History, Vol. 8, No. 1, Readers and Spectators: Some Views and Reviews.
(Autumn, 1976), pp. 75-105.

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The Fiction Film and Its Spectator: A Metapsychological Study*

Christian Metz

THE DREAMER does not know that he is dreaming; the film spectator knows that he is at the movies: this is the first and principal difference between the filmic and oneiric situations. We sometimes speak of the illusion of reality in one or the other, but true illusion belongs to the dream and to it alone. In the case of the cinema it is better to limit oneself, as I have done until now, to remarking the existence of a certain *impression* of reality.

However, the gap between the two states sometimes tends to diminish. At the movies affective participation, depending on the fiction of the film and the spectator's personality, can become very lively, and *perceptual transference* then increases by a degree for brief instants of fleeting intensity. The subject's consciousness of the filmic situation as such starts to become a bit murky and to waver, although this slippage, easily begun, is never carried to its conclusion in ordinary circumstances.

I am not thinking so much of those film shows (some still exist¹) where one can see the spectators, often young children, sometimes adults, rise from their seats, gesticulate, shout encouragement to the hero of the story, and insult the "bad guy": manifestations, in general, less disorderly than they seem: it is the institution of cinema itself, in certain of its sociological variants (i.e., the audience of children, the rural audience, the audience with little schooling, the community audience where everybody in the theater knows everybody else), that provides for, sanctions, and integrates them. If we want to understand them, we must take account of the conscious game-playing and group demands, the *encouragement given to the spectacle* by the play of motor activity. To this extent, the expenditure of muscular energy (voice and gesture) signifies almost the opposite of what it might first suggest to the observer fresh from the big city and its anonymous and silent movie theaters. It does not necessarily indicate that the audience is a little further down the road of true illusion. Rather, we have here one of those intrinsically ambivalent behaviors in which a single action, with double roots, expresses simultaneously virtually opposite tendencies. The subject actively invading the diegesis² through a motor outburst was initially aroused by a first step, modest as it is—*prescribed* as it is, necessarily, by the

* This article, written in French for publication in *Communications* (1975), appears here in English for the first time.

indigenous rituals of the film audience—a first step toward confusing film and reality. But the outburst itself, once it has been set in motion (an outburst, moreover, which is most often collective), works to dissipate the budding confusion by returning the subjects to their rightful activity, which is not that of the protagonists as it is evolving on the screen: the latter do not assent to the spectacle. To exaggerate things so as to see them better, we might say that what begins as *acting out* ends as *action*. (We shall thus distinguish two main types of motor outburst, those that escape reality testing and those that remain under its control.) The spectator lets himself be carried away—perhaps deceived, for the space of a second—by the anagogic powers belonging to a diegetic film, and he begins to act; but it is precisely this action that awakens him, pulls him back from his brief lapse into a kind of sleep, where the action had its root, and ends up by restoring the distance between the film and him. It accomplishes this to the extent that it develops into a behavior of approval: approval of the spectacle as such and not necessarily of its quality, still less of all its diegetic features; approval brought from without to an imaginary tale by a person performing real actions to this purpose.

If we consider its possible economic conditions (in the Freudian sense of the term³), the attitude of the “good audience,” the exuberant audience, or the audience of children, displays, in a milder form, something in common with somnambulism: it can be defined, at least in the first of its two stages, as a particular type of motor conduct characteristically released by sleep or by its fleeting, outlined homologue. This relationship can be enlightening as a contribution to a metapsychology of the filmic state, but it quickly finds its limits, since the enthusiastic audience is awakened by its actions whereas the somnambulist is not (it is therefore in their second stages that the two processes differ). Moreover, it is not certain that the somnambulist is dreaming, whereas in the case of the spectator entering into the action, the lapse into sleep is simultaneously a lapse into dreaming. Now we know that the dream, which escapes reality testing, does not escape consciousness (rather, it constitutes one of the major activities of the conscious person); the dissociation of “motoricity” from consciousness is therefore capable of going further in certain cases of somnambulism than in audience behaviors of the “intervening” type.⁴

Other conditions, less spectacular than those of the shouting audience, are necessary in order for perceptual transference, the dreamlike and sleepy confusion of film and reality, still very far from its total fulfillment, to become any more stable. The adult spectator, who belongs to a social group that watches films seated and silent—he, in short (that other sort of native), who is neither a child nor childlike—finds himself without defenses, if the film touches him profoundly or if he is in a state of fatigue or emotional turmoil, etc., against those brief moments of mental seesawing which each of us has experienced and which bring him a step closer to true illusion. This approach to a strong (or stronger) type of belief in the diegesis is a bit like the brief and quickly passing dizziness that drivers feel toward the end of a long night journey (of which film is one). In the two situations, when the second

state, the brief psychical giddiness, ends, the subject not coincidentally has the feeling of "waking up": this is because he has furtively engaged in the state of sleeping and dreaming. The spectator thus will have dreamt a little bit of the film: not because that bit was missing and he imagined it: it actually appeared in the *bande*,⁵ and this, not something else, is what the subject saw; but he saw it while dreaming.

The spectator who, as our society prescribes, is immobile and silent does not have the opportunity to "shake off" his budding dream, as one would remove the dust from a garment, through a motor outburst. This is undoubtedly why he pushes perceptual transference a bit further than do audiences who actively invade the diegesis (there is material here for a socioanalytic typology of the different ways of *attending* a film screening). We can therefore suppose that it is the same quantum of energy that serves in one case to nourish action and in the other to hypercathect perception to the point of touching off a *paradoxical hallucination*: a hallucination because of its tendency to confuse distinct levels of reality and because of a slight temporary unsteadiness in the play of reality testing as an ego function,⁶ and paradoxical because it lacks the characteristic proper to a true hallucination of wholly endogenous psychical production: the subject, for an instant, has hallucinated what was really there, what at the same moment he in fact perceived: the images and sounds of the film.

In the cases of which we have just spoken, and doubtless in others too, the spectator of a novelistic [*romanesque*] film no longer quite knows that he is at the movies. It also happens, conversely, that the dreamer up to a certain point knows that he is dreaming—for instance, in the intermediary states between sleep and waking, especially at the beginning and end of the night (or when deep sleep steals away, leaving only incomplete, heavy, and fragmentary shreds), and more generally at all those times when thoughts like "I am in the middle of a dream" or "This is only a dream" spring to mind, thoughts which, by a single and double movement, come to be integrated in the dream of which they form a part, and in the process open a gap in the hermetic sealing-off that ordinarily defines dreaming.⁷ By virtue of their specific cleavage, *visées*⁸ of this kind resemble the special regimens of filmic perception already discussed. It is in their gaps rather than in their more normal functioning that the filmic state and the oneiric state tend to converge (but the gaps themselves suggest a kinship at once less close and more permanent): in the one case, perceptual transference is ruptured and less of a piece than in the rest of the dream; in the other, it sets its limit a bit more insistently than in the rest of the film.

Freud attributed the gaps in the dream to a complex interaction between different metapsychological, and in particular topographical, agencies.⁹ In principle, the ego wants to sleep: to sleep and therefore, if necessary, to dream (to dream deeply). In effect, when a wish rises from the unconscious, the dream presents itself as the only means of satisfying the wish without setting in motion the process of waking up. But the unconscious part of the ego, the repressing agency (the "defense"), in accord with the superego

which inspires it, constantly stays in a state of semiwakefulness, while the repressed, and the forbidden more generally, against which, indeed, the unconscious part of the ego is commissioned to defend, also remain wakeful and active, or at least capable of activation, even during sleep. The unconscious, in its double aspect of repressed and repressing (i.e., unconscious of the id and unconscious of the ego), never really sleeps, and what we call sleep is an economic modification principally affecting the preconscious and conscious.¹⁰ The wakefulness of one part of the ego, which permits the other part to go on sleeping, usually assumes the form of censorship (itself inseparable from "the dreamwork" and the manifest characteristics of the dream flux); this censorship, as we know, attends even the deepest dreams, those where perceptual transference is total and the impression of dreaming absent, those in short which are entirely compatible with sleep. But it can also happen that this agency of self-observation and self-surveillance¹¹ may be led to interrupt sleep to various degrees, the two contrary effects proceeding from the same defensive mission carried out in different circumstances.¹² Such a dream creates too much fear; the censorship, in its initial stage, has failed to sweeten the content of the dream sufficiently, so that its second intervention tends to consist in stopping the dream and sleep along with it. Certain nightmares wake one up (more or less), as do certain excessively pleasurable dreams; certain insomnias are the work of the ego, which, frightened by the prospect of its dreams, prefers to renounce sleep.¹³ Given a lesser degree of violence in the internal conflict and therefore a lesser degree of wakefulness, this is the same process that is responsible for the various operations of consciousness in which the subject is sufficiently asleep for his dream to continue but sufficiently awake to know that it is only a dream—thus approaching a very common filmic situation—or again when he exercises an intentioned influence over the very unfolding of the dream,¹⁴ for example, substituting for anticipated sequences another, more satisfying or less frightening, version (we have here something like a film with *alternative* versions, and cinema sometimes offers constructions of this kind).¹⁵

These different situations have a point in common. They stem from an active intervention of the agency which sleeps only partially, the unconscious ego; it is this that more or less energetically awakens the sleeping agency, the preconscious ego. In other cases, which in a sense end up with the same result, it is the characteristic rhythms of the latter that come directly into play: it is not still entirely asleep, or it has already started to be so no longer, as in the "intermediary states" of evening and morning. As for the function of *consciousness*, let us recall that it sleeps only when sleep is dreamless. Dreams, even when accompanied by deep sleep, wake it up and put it to work, for the final text of its productions is conscious. Truly deep sleep (which does not exist) would be a psychical regimen in which all the agencies slept. We can speak of "deep sleep," in a relative and practical sense, in two circumstances: when the dream is accompanied by no consciousness of being a dream, and *a fortiori* when sleep is dreamless. These two situations taken together cover almost all the cases that ordinary language calls "deep sleep" (or simply "sleep," without qualification). They correspond to the

maximal degree of sleep of which the psychical apparatus in its normal functioning is capable.

These metapsychological mechanisms are obviously complex, much more so than this cavalier summary indicates, but I shall retain only their implied common basis: that the *visée* of deep dreaming, the total illusion of reality, supposes deep sleep in the sense just defined. We know how much Freud insisted on this close correlation between dream and sleep (devoting a special study to it in addition to *The Interpretation of Dreams* itself), a correlation going well beyond the simple visible evidence, since it is not only external (i.e., "We dream only while sleeping"), but because the internal process of the dream is predicated in its particulars on the economic conditions of sleep.¹⁶ As a corollary, each slackening in the full exercise of perceptual transference corresponds to a weakening of sleep, to a certain manner or degree of waking. Given our perspective, all this can be summarized as follows: the degree of illusion of reality is inversely proportional to that of *wakefulness*.

This formulation will perhaps be of help in better understanding the filmic state, setting it in relation to the oneiric state as a complex mixture of similarities and differences. In contrast to the ordinary activities of life, the filmic state as induced by traditional fiction films (and in this respect it is true that these films demobilize their spectators) is marked by a general tendency to lower wakefulness, to take a step in the direction of sleep and dreaming. When one has not had enough sleep, dozing off is usually more a danger during the projection of a film than before or even afterwards. The narrative film does not incite one to action, and if it is like a mirror, this is not only, as has been said,¹⁷ by virtue of playing the scenes Italian style or of the vanishing point of monocular perspective, which puts the spectator-subject in a position to admire himself like a god, or because it reactivates in us the conditions belonging to the mirror phase in Lacan's sense (i.e., heightened perception and lowered motoricity)¹⁸—it is also and more directly, even if the two things are linked, because it encourages narcissistic withdrawal and receptiveness to phantasy which, when pushed further, enter into the definition of dreaming and sleep:¹⁹ withdrawal of the libido into the ego, temporary suspension of concern for the exterior world as well as object cathexes, at least in their real form. In this respect, the novelistic film, a mill of images and sounds overfeeding our zones of shadow and irresponsibility, is a machine for grinding up affectivity and inhibiting action. In the filmic state, this diminution of wakefulness admits (at least) two distinct degrees. The first is constituted in a quite general way and consists in the very fact of the impression of reality, assuredly different from the illusion of reality, but nonetheless its far-off beginning; and all diegetic films, quite apart from their content and their degree of "realism," characteristically play on this impression, draw their specific charm and power from it, and are made for this purpose. One step further in the lowering of wakefulness, and we have the special regimens of filmic perception of which I spoke at the outset. They intervene in a more fleeting, episodic fashion; they move a bit further toward genuine illusion (though without ever reaching it) during the brief

instant of a psychical giddiness.

It remains that the spectator almost always knows that he is at the movies, the dreamer almost never that he is dreaming. Beyond the intermediary cases, discreet indicators of a kinship at once more profound and dialectical, the fiction film and the dream remain separated, if we consider each of them in its entirety, by an important and regular difference in the degree of perceptual transference; the impression and illusion remain distinct. The maintenance of this distinction in ordinary operations, as well as its weakening in borderline cases, has one and the same cause, which is sleep or its absence. The filmic and oneiric states tend to converge when the spectator begins to doze off [*s'endormir*] (although ordinary language at this stage does not speak of "sleep" [*sommeil*]), or when the dreamer begins to wake up. But the dominant situation is that in which film and dream are not confounded: this is because the film spectator is a man awake, whereas the dreamer is a man asleep.

II

The second major difference between the filmic and oneiric *visées* derives strictly from the first. Filmic perception *is* a real perception (is really a perception); it is not reducible to an internal psychical process. The spectator receives images and sounds offered as the representation of something other than themselves, of a diegetic universe, but remaining true images and sounds capable of reaching other spectators as well, whereas the oneiric flux can reach the consciousness of no one but the dreamer. The projection of the film cannot begin before the reels arrive: nothing of this sort is required for the dream to be set in motion. The film image belongs to that class of "real images" (tableaux, drawings, engravings, etc.) which psychologists oppose to mental images. The difference between the two is what separates perception from imagination in the terms of a phenomenology of consciousness. The production of the dream consists of a series of operations remaining from start to finish within the psychical apparatus. In a behaviorist system one would say that what characterizes filmic perception is that it requires a stimulus, whereas oneiric "perception" does not.

The *delusion coefficient* is therefore very superior in the dream: doubly superior, because the subject "believes" more deeply, and because what he believes in is less "true." But in another sense (and we shall return to this), the diegetic delusion, less powerful in the absolute, is, when related to its circumstances, more singular, perhaps more formidable, because it is the delusion of a man awake. The oneiric delusion has been partly neutralized, ever since man dreamt, by the bromide that "this was only a dream." This time-honored method of trivialization, despite such equivalents as "it's just a movie," is harder to apply to the filmic delusion, since we are not asleep at the movies, and we know it.

With its authentic images and sounds, the novelistic film helps nourish

the subject's phantasy flux and irrigates the figurations of his wish; it is not to be doubted that the classical cinema is among other things a practical means of affective fulfillment. (But we should not forget that it is not alone in playing this very ancient and far from contemptible role: all *fiction*—what Freud calls “fancy”²⁰—even in arts commonly thought nobler, serves this same purpose, which an empty moralism, preoccupied with decorum, would like to distinguish from “authentic art.”) Inasmuch as it proposes behavioral schemes and libidinal prototypes, corporal postures, types of dress, models of free behavior or seduction, and is the initiating authority for a perpetual adolescence, the classical film has taken, relay fashion, the historical place of the grand-epoch, nineteenth-century novel (itself descended from the ancient epic); it fills the same social function, a function which the twentieth-century novel, less and less diegetic and representational, tends partly to abandon.

We observe, however, that film narratives [*récits*] often thwart the imagination. Given certain combinations of film and spectator, they are liable to induce reactions in which affective irritation or phantasmic allergy appear, and which are nothing other, whatever rationalization the subject gives to them, than frustrations classically resulting in aggressivity against the frustrating agent, here the film itself. The spectator maintains with the film an object relation (good or bad object), and films, as indicated by the current and enigmatic formulas we use after seeing them, are things that we “like” or “don’t like.” The liveliness of these reactions in certain cases, and the very existence of *filmic unpleasure*, only serve to confirm the kinship of fiction film and phantasy. Common experience shows that film very often divides the opinions of people who otherwise nearly always react in unison (but let me add, and this is an additional confirmation, that these divergences generally manage to even themselves out when phantasy adjustment is at work since birth and is pursued progressively: when two persons see the film together, this is to say that each of them is alone without being so).

From the topographical point of view, filmic unpleasure can arise, depending on the circumstances, from two distinct sources, and sometimes from their convergent action. It can arise on the side of the id when the id is insufficiently nourished by the diegesis of the film; instinctual satisfaction is stingily dealt out, and we have then a case of frustration in the proper sense (actual frustration, in Freudian terms): hence films that seem to us “dull” or “boring” or “ordinary,” etc. But aggressivity against the film—whose conscious form in both cases consists in declaring that one has not liked it, that is to say, that it has been a bad object—can result equally from an intervention of the superego and the defenses of the ego, which are frightened and counterattack when, on the other hand, the satisfaction of the id has been too lively, as sometimes happens with films “in bad taste” (taste then becomes an excellent alibi), or extremist, or childish, or sentimental, or sado-pornographic films, etc., in a word, films against which we defend ourselves (at least when we have been touched) by smiling or laughing, by an allegation of stupidity, grotesqueness, or “lack of verisimilitude.” In short, if a subject is to “like” a film, the detail of the diegesis must suffi-

ciently please his conscious and unconscious phantasies to permit him a certain instinctual satisfaction, and this satisfaction must stay within certain limits, must not pass the point at which anguish and rejection would be mobilized. In other words, the spectator's defenses (or at least the processes of edulcoration and symbolic substitution which are sufficiently efficacious functional equivalents for them) must be integrated with the very content of the film by one of those happy accidents that also preside over the relations between people and the "encounters" of life, in such a way that the subject can avoid activating his own defenses, which would inevitably be translated into antipathy for the film. In short, every time a fiction film has not been liked, it is because it has been liked too much, or not enough, or both.

Whatever the psychical paths that produce it, filmic unpleasure is a thing that exists: certain spectators do not like certain films. The fiction cinema, which in principle caters to the phantasy, can also thwart it: one person might not have imagined heroes of the particular physiognomy or stature that the screen offers to his perception and that he cannot retouch; he is secretly annoyed that the plot does not take the course he hoped for; he "doesn't see things that way." Those spectators whom the intellectual (a native too often ignored) considers naive do not hesitate to say that they dislike a film because it ends badly or because it is too bold, too unfeeling, too sad, etc.; if they were any more ingenuous they would tell us quite clearly that the film is bad "because it's the nice tall blond man who should have survived" or "because the two farmers should have been able to understand each other and be reconciled" (these are only random examples, but many conversations about movies are of this order, even the majority if we consider the population of spectators as a whole). The intellectual protests, this time rightly, that the characters of the film, as long as they are presented thus, are part of its raw content and cannot constitute criteria of evaluation. But he would be doubly naive if he forgot, or if he concealed from himself, that something in him—which is better left hidden but never entirely disappears—responds to films in the same way. These phenomena of *phantasy deception* are particularly apparent when an already known novel is brought to the screen. The reader of the novel, following the characteristic and singular paths of his desire, proceeds to give complete visual clothing to the words he reads, and when he sees the film, he wishes very strongly to recover this (in fact to *see it again*, by virtue of that implacable force of repetition that inhabits desire, driving the child to play unceasingly with the same toy, the adolescent to listen unceasingly to the same record, before abandoning it for the next, which in its turn will fill a portion of his days). But the reader of the novel will not always reencounter his film, since what he has before him in the actual film is now somebody else's phantasy, a thing rarely sympathetic (to the extent that when it becomes so, it inspires love).

Let us add here a second great difference between the filmic state and the oneiric state. As hallucinatory wish-fulfillment, the fiction film is less *certain* than the dream; it fails more often at its ordinary mission. This is because it is not really hallucinatory. It rests on true perceptions which the subject

cannot fashion to his liking, on images and sounds imposed on him from without. The dream responds to the wish with more exactitude and regularity: devoid of exterior material, it is assured of never colliding with reality (and reality includes other people's phantasy). It is like a film which has been "shot" from beginning to end by the very subject of the wish, and equally of fear, a singular film by virtue of its censorship and omissions as much as its expressed content, cut to the measure of its unique spectator (this is another sort of *découpage*²¹), a spectator who is also the *auteur* and has every reason to be content with it, since one is never so well served as by oneself.

In Freudian theory, the dream, along with the hallucination strictly defined and the other special regimens of consciousness (Meynert's *amentia*, etc.), belongs to a particular group of economic situations, the "hallucinatory psychoses of desire."²² Under this heading Freud grouped the diverse and precise conditions in which an absent object can be hallucinated if its presence is desired with enough force. This is to say that it cannot give unpleasure, at least in itself (second reactions to the hallucination can of course be painful). The diegetic film, on the other hand, which in certain respects is still of the order of phantasy, also belongs to the *order of reality*. It exhibits one of reality's major characteristics: in relation to the wish (and to the fear which is the other face of the wish), it can "turn out" more or less well; it is not fundamentally their accomplice; it can become so only after the fact, through an encounter or adjustment whose success is never guaranteed: it can please or displease, like the real, and because it is part of the real. Thus, compared to the dream, which is more strongly bound to the pure pleasure principle, the filmic state rests rather on the reality principle: keeping pleasure for its ultimate goal, it admits sometimes long and arduous tactical detours by way of unpleasures felt as such. This difference in psychical effect derives from an entirely material difference, the presence in the film, without equivalent in the dream, of images and sounds chemically inscribed on an external support, that is to say, the very existence of the film as "recording" and as *bande*.

The physical reality of the film, a simple and important fact, is not without relation to the first problem considered in this study, that of sleep and waking. The hallucinatory process can establish itself, in the normal state, only in the economic conditions of sleep.²³ In the waking situation, and therefore in the cinematographic situation, the most common path of the psychical excitations traces out a one-way line, a directed line which is Freud's "progressive path." The impulses originate in the external world (daily surroundings or filmic *bande*); they reach the psychical apparatus via its perceptual extremity (i.e., the system of perception-consciousness), and finally come to be inscribed in the form of mnemonic traces in a less peripheral psychical system, which is sometimes the preconscious ("memories" in the ordinary sense of the word), and sometimes the unconscious, with its own memory, when the case involves impressions of the world that have been repressed after reception. This itinerary goes, then, from the external toward the internal. In sleep and in dreams, the route is the reverse; the "regressive path"²⁴ has as a point of departure the preconscious and the unconscious, as a point of arrival the illusion of perception. The driving power of the dream

is the unconscious wish,²⁵ linked to repressed childhood memories; it is itself reactivated, through associations of affects and ideas, by more recent, unrepressed, preconscious memories ("the day's residues"); these two incitements, once reunited, constitute the dream's preconscious wish.²⁶ It is, therefore, a group of memories, preconscious and unconscious, that set off the whole process, and it is these memories, remodeled and transformed by the censorship, the "dreamwork," the imaginary adjunctions, etc., that tend to be deployed in the terminal (manifest) content of the oneiric apprehension. But in order to arrive at this apprehension with its singular power of illusion, the mnemonic traces, bearers of the wish, must be hypercathected to the point of hallucination, that is to say, up to the point of vividness where they are confused with perceptions: to the point, in sum, where they activate, if not the sense organs in their ordinary physiological functioning, at least the system of perception insofar as it is a specific psychological agency and *visée de conscience*. Thus the regressive path has perception as its point of arrival, but its particular characteristic is to cathect it from within (this is the very definition of hallucinatory psychosis), whereas usually perception is cathected from without, a feature which establishes it as true perception. Freud recalls that certain activities of waking life, such as visualizing meditation or the voluntary evocation of memories,²⁷ also rest on the principle of regression, but in these cases regression is arrested before its conclusion, for the memory and the mental image are here clearly recognized by the subject, who does not take them to be perceptions. What is lacking in these *visées* is the last stage of the regressive process, the properly hallucinatory stage, that which continues until it reaches the perceptual function from within on the basis of representations that are purely psychological but highly charged with desire. Complete regression is therefore possible, apart from pathological cases, only in the state of sleep, and this is also why the film spectator, a person who is not asleep, remains incapable of true hallucination even when the fiction is of a kind to stir his desires strongly. In the waking state, the regressive flux, when it appears, runs up against a nearly uninterrupted progressive counter-flux more powerful than it²⁸ which prevents it from going to its conclusion. Sleep, however, suspends this inverse thrust by stopping the perceptions and thus frees the way for the regressive impressions, which can go to the end of their proper route. In the filmic state, which is one of the variants of the waking state, this classical analysis is fully confirmed and its formulations do not have to be modified but simply made precise: the counter-flux (which is here particularly rich, pressing, continuous) is that of the film itself, of the real images and sounds which cathect perception from without.

But if this is the case, our problem is displaced and our interrogation must take a new tack. What remains to be understood in terms of economy is that the filmic state, despite wakefulness and counter-flux, leaves room for the beginnings of regression, of which I have already spoken, and is marked by more or less consistent psychological thrusts in the direction of perceptual transference and paradoxical hallucination. More fundamentally, it is the impres-

sion of reality itself, and therefore the possibility of a certain affective satisfaction by way of the diegesis, that presupposes the beginning of regression, since this impression is nothing other than a general tendency (stillborn or more developed, depending on the case) to perceive as true and external the events and the heroes of the fiction rather than the images and sounds belonging purely to the screening process (which are, nonetheless, the only real impression): a tendency, in short, to perceive as real the represented and not the representer (the technological medium of the representation), to pass over the latter without seeing it for what it is, to press on blindly. If the film shows a galloping horse, we have the impression of seeing a galloping horse and not the moving spots of light which evoke a galloping horse. One touches here on the great and classic difficulty of interpretation that all *representation* poses. In the conditions peculiar to the cinema, it can be stated thus: how does the spectator effect the mental leap which alone can lead him from the perceptual donnée, consisting of moving visual and sonic impressions, to the constitution of a fictional universe, from an objectively real but denied signifier to an imaginary but psychologically real signified? It is true that a regressive outline a bit like this one is also established in other waking states, such as memory evocation, but this still tells us nothing (especially since conditions there are obviously extremely different) about the particular forms that clothe this phenomenon in a case like the filmic state, where it has not been studied from this point of view.

The progressive path defined by Freud also admits of a variation (a bifurcation, rather) which this text has until now left aside.²⁹ In waking life, action, that is to say, the ego function that consists of modifying the real in the direction of the wish, requires a complete perceptual regulation preceding and permanently accompanying it. In order to grasp an object, it is necessary to have seen, and to be seeing, it. Thus all day long, impressions from without reach the psychical apparatus through the door of perception, and "go out again" (so to speak) in the form of motor activity directed back toward the world. If the dream is predicated on sleep, this then is also because sleep suspends all action and thus results in blocking the motor outlet, an exutory that, by contrast, remains constantly available in the waking state and helps considerably in impeding regression by absorbing through muscular modification all sorts of excitations which, without it, have a greater tendency to flow back toward the perceptual outlet, which is precisely what they do in dreams.

The filmic situation brings with it certain elements of motor inhibition, and it is in this respect a kind of sleep in miniature, a waking sleep. The spectator is relatively immobile; he is plunged into a relative darkness, and, above all, he is not unaware of the spectaclelike nature of the film object and the cinema institution in their historically constituted form: he has decided in advance to conduct himself as a spectator (a function from which he takes his name), a spectator and not an actor (the actors have their assigned place, which is elsewhere: on the other side of the film); for the duration of the projection he puts off any plan of action. (Movie theaters are of course also used for other purposes, but to the extent that they are, their occupants have

ceased to be spectators and have voluntarily abandoned the filmic state for a sort of behavior belonging to reality) In the case of the true spectator, motor manifestations are few:³⁰ shifting around in the seat, more or less conscious modification of facial expression, occasional comment under the breath, laughing (if the film, intentionally or not, provokes it), pursuing intermittent verbal or gestural relations (in the case of spectators in couples or groups) with the person in the next seat, etc. The institutional situation of the spectacle inherently prevents motor conduct from following its normal course very far, even in cases where the diegesis of the film is in a position to invoke active extensions of it (i.e., erotic sequences, sequences of political mobilization, etc.; this is where these genres contradict themselves in their pseudo-rupture of the fiction and could, in a sense, whether desirable or not, truly begin to exist as *films* only if the *cinema* as a ritual were profoundly changed, in particular with respect to the customary forms of the "screening" ["*séance*," a word denoting "sitting down"—Tr.] itself; it is also in this regard that so-called specialized screenings or film tracts possess, in default of subtlety or charm, more coherence and honesty). In ordinary screening conditions, as everyone has had the opportunity to observe, the subject who has fallen prey to the filmic state (most of all when the grip of the fiction on his phantasy is sufficiently strong) feels numb, and spectators at the exit, brutally rejected by the black belly of the theater into the glaring and mischievous light of the lobby, sometimes have the bewildered expression (happy and unhappy) of people waking up. To leave the movies is a little like getting up: not always easy (except if the film was really indifferent).

The filmic state thus embodies in a weaker form certain economic conditions of sleep. It remains a variant of the waking situation but less remote from sleep than most of the others. Here at a new turn in the road, with the partial blockage of the motor outlet, we again come across the notion of a lessened wakefulness, initially proposed in reference to the perceptual conditions of the filmic state (the two things go together, sleep inhibiting perception and action simultaneously). The psychical energy which, in other circumstances of waking life, would be dissipated in action is, by contrast, conserved, even if by necessity, in the case of the cinema spectator. It tends to follow other itineraries of discharge, by virtue of the pleasure principle, which always seeks to liquidate stases. It tends to turn back in the direction of the perceptual agency, to appropriate the regressive path, to occupy itself hypercathecting perception from within. And since the film at the same moment characteristically offers rich nourishment to this perception from without, complete regression of the oneiric kind is obstructed to the profit of a sort of semiregression representing another type of economic equilibrium, differing in its dosage but equally marked and characteristic. What defines this equilibrium is a *double reinforcement* of the perceptual function, simultaneously from without and within: apart from the filmic state, there are few situations in which a subject receives particularly dense and organized impressions from without at the same moment that his immobility predisposes him to "hyper-receive" ["*sur-recevoir*"] them from within. The classical film plays on this pincer action, the two branches of which it has itself set up. It is

the double reinforcement which renders possible the impression of reality; it is thanks to it that the spectator, starting from the material on the screen, the only thing given him at the outset (i.e., the spots of light in movement within a rectangle, the sounds and words coming from nowhere) tends to become capable of a certain degree of *belief* in the reality of an imaginary world whose signs are furnished him, capable of fiction, in sum. For the fictional capacity, as we too often forget, is not exclusively (or primarily) the capacity—unequally shared and for this reason prized by aesthetes—to invent fiction; it is above all the historically constituted and much more widespread existence of a regimen of socially regulated psychical functioning, to which we rightly give the name of fiction. Before being an art, fiction is a fact (a fact of which certain art forms take possession).

The relation between this fictional capacity and the film of narrative representation is close and mutual. The diegetic cinema as an institution could not function—and it would not therefore have begun to exist, whereas in fact it has scarcely begun to disappear and even today accounts for the biggest share of production, good or bad—if the spectator, already “prepared” by the older arts of representation (the novel, representational painting, etc.) and by the Aristotelian tradition of Western art in general, were not capable of adopting in a stable and voluntarily renewed fashion the special regimen of perception that we are trying to analyze here in Freudian terms. But inversely, the existence of a movie industry which produces abundantly and ceaselessly trades on the psychical effect which renders it possible and profitable (possible because profitable), works to stabilize this effect, differentiate it, frame it, enclose it, and keep it alive by offering it a continued possibility of satisfaction; thus the industry ends up by reproducing its own conditions of possibility. Moreover, although the fictional capacity was already at the root of all the mimetic arts (and although the very notion of diegesis, contrary to what certain people believe, goes back to Greek philosophy, to Aristotle and Plato, and not to the semiology of the cinema), it remains true that film, as I have tried to show elsewhere in a more phenomenological vein,³¹ produces an impression of reality much more vivid than does the novel or the theater, since the inherent nature of the cinematographic signifier, with its particularly “faithful” [*“ressemblantes”*] photographic images, with the real presence of movement and sound, etc., has for a result the inflection of the fiction phenomenon, however ancient, in the direction of historically more recent and socially specific forms.

III

The set of differences between fiction film and dream, and also therefore the set of their partial resemblances, may be organized around three great facts issuing, each in its own way, from the difference between waking and sleep: first, the *unequal knowledge of the subject* with respect to what he is doing; second, the presence or absence of a real perceptual object; and third,

an important characteristic of the textual content itself (text of the film or dream), about which we are now going to speak. The diegetic film is in general considerably more "logical" and "constructed" than the dream. Fantastic or marvelous films, the most unrealistic films, are very often only films that obey another logic, a genre logic (like the realistic film itself), a set of ground rules which they have laid down at the outset (genres are institutions) and within which they are perfectly coherent. It rarely happens that we find in a film narrative that impression of *true absurdity* commonly felt before the memory of our own dreams or accounts of dreams, that very specific, very recognizable impression (from which intentionally absurd films, like the "literature of the absurd" of not long ago, remain so remote) wherein at once enter the internal obscurity of the elements and the confusion of their assemblage, the enigmatic brilliance of the zones that the wish dazzles and the dark, swarming shipwreck of the almost forgotten segments, the sensation of tension and relaxation, the suspected outcropping of a buried order and the evidence of an authentic incoherence, an incoherence which, unlike that of films that aspire to delirium, is not a labored addition but the very core of the text.

The psychologist René Zazzo,³² touching on the basis of a repeated remark of Freud's, rightly affirms that the manifest content of a dream, if it were strictly transposed to the screen, would make an unintelligible film. A film, I may add, truly unintelligible (an object in fact very rare), and not one of those avant-garde or experimental films which, as the enlightened audience knows, it is appropriate at once to understand and not to understand (not understanding being the better way to understand and too much effort at understanding being the height of misunderstanding, etc.). These films, whose objective social function is to answer the naively puzzled wish of certain intellectuals for nonnaïveté, have integrated within their institutional regimen of intelligibility a certain dose of elegant and coded unintelligibility, in such a way that their very unintelligibility is in return intelligible. What is in question here is again a genre, and one which illustrates the contrary of what it would like to show; it reveals how difficult it is for a film to achieve true absurdity, pure incomprehensibility, that very thing which our most ordinary dreams, at least in certain sequences, achieve directly and effortlessly. It is undoubtedly for the same reason that "dream sequences" in narrative films are nearly always so unbelievable.

We encounter here the problem of the secondary revision.³³ In his various writings, Freud gives somewhat different accounts of the exact moment that the secondary revision intervenes within the complete production process of the dream (i.e., the dreamwork). Sometimes he considers that it comes into play toward the end,³⁴ following the condensations, displacements, and various "figurations," and that its function is to put a hasty, last-moment logical façade over the illogical productions of the primary process. Sometimes he situates it perceptibly upstream³⁵ at the level of the dream thoughts themselves or of a choice retroactively made among them. Finally (and this is the most probable hypothesis), he sometimes refuses to assign it a segmental position within a quasi-chronology³⁶ and considers that the different process-

es resulting in the manifest dream occur in a tangle, that is to say, in a manner at once alternating, successive, and simultaneous. (There is also the case where a phantasy, therefore a mental object by definition secondary, is integrated as in the manifest dream; we shall come back to this.) But in any case, what remains is that the secondary process is only one of the forces whose combinations and compromises determine the conscious content of the dream and that its entire weight is very often less than that of other concurrent mechanisms (condensations, displacements, figurations), all under the control of the primary process. This is surely why "dream logic" (the logic of the oneiric diegesis) is truly alien, and why one object can instantly transform itself into another without provoking the dreamer's astonishment until he wakes up, why a silhouette can be *clearly* recognized as being (being, not "representing") two persons at once, whom the dreamer, without further confusion, at the same moment considers distinct, etc. Between the logic of the most "absurd" film and that of the dream, there will always remain a difference, because in the latter what is astonishing does not astonish and consequently nothing is absurd: whence, precisely, the astonishment and the impression of the absurd one feels on waking.

The primary process rests on the "pure" pleasure principle, uncorrected by the reality principle, and under this title it aims at the maximal and immediate discharge of psychical excitations (affects, representations, "thoughts," etc.). All the itineraries of energy discharge are therefore good for it, and it is the basis of condensation and displacement, which are non-bound paths; in displacement, for example, the entire psychical charge is transposed from one object to another without being bound by the constraints of reality that make two objects substantially distinct and not susceptible to total equivalence. The secondary process, which on the other hand obeys the reality principle, always consists in fixing certain paths of thought (i.e., bound energy) and preventing the discharge of impressions by other routes; this is the very definition of the various logics of waking, that is, of the various logics (simply) if we take the word in its usual sense. But since the primary process belongs to the unconscious, its characteristic operations are shielded from direct observation, and we can know them, or at least have an idea of them, only thanks to privileged cases such as the symptom, the slip, and acting out [*acting*], etc., in which the outcomes of these specific routes (but not the routes themselves) become conscious and manifest.

Among these privileged cases, one of the principal ones is the dream. It has a further privilege in that it is the only one that is neither neurotic, like the symptom or acting out, nor excessively minor, like slips and bungled acts. In sum, for the primary "logic" to result in conscious productions of any importance, in a normal situation the conditions of the dream, therefore of sleep, are necessary. It is sleep, more than the dream itself, which suspends the exercise of the reality principle,³⁷ since the sleeping subject does not have any real task to accomplish. And when he is awake (when he is, for example, watching or making a film), the secondary process succeeds in recovering all its psychical paths, thoughts, feelings, and actions, so that the primary process, which remains its permanent basis, ceases to achieve directly observa-

ble results, since everything observable, before becoming so, must pass through the secondary logic, which is that of the conscious.

From the point of view of the cinema analyst, everything happens then as if the secondary revision (which in the production-perception of the dream is only one force among others, and not the principal one) became in the production and perception of the film the dominant, omnipresent force, the architect of the *mental milieu* itself, the milieu and the place [*lieu*] where the film is delivered and received. When we trace the obscure kinship relations (interwoven as they are by differences) of the film and the dream, we come upon that unique and methodologically attractive object, that theoretical monster, namely, a dream in which the secondary revision does nearly everything by itself, a dream where the primary process plays only a furtive and intermittent role, a role of gap-maker, a role of *escape*: a dream, in short, like life. That is to say (we always come back to this), the dream of a man awake, a man who knows that he is dreaming and who consequently knows that he is not dreaming, who knows that he is at the movies, *who knows that he is not sleeping*: since if a man who is sleeping is a man who does not know that he is sleeping, a man who knows that he is not sleeping is a man who is not sleeping.

What conditions must be met in order that we may experience this specific impression of true absurdity? They are precise, and Freud often alludes to them.³⁸ An unconscious production, largely dominated by the primary process, must be directly presented to the conscious aperception; it is this brutal transplantation from one milieu to another, this uprooting, which provokes the conscious feeling of absurdity: as when we evoke, when awake, the memory of our own dreams. In the case of film, these conditions are not met; one of them is (the presentation to the conscious agency), but the other is not, since what is presented is not a direct production of the unconscious, or at least is not any more so than are the ordinary discourses and actions of life. This is why the film, a production of a man awake presented to a man awake, cannot help being "constructed," logical, and felt as such.

However, the filmic flux resembles the oneiric flux more than other productions of waking resemble it. It is received, as we have said, in a state of lessened wakefulness. Its signifier (images accompanied by sound and movement) inherently confers on it a certain affinity with the dream, for it coincides directly with one of the major features of the oneiric signifier, "imaged" expression, the consideration of representability, to use Freud's term. It is true that the image can organize itself—and that it does so most often, in the cinema as elsewhere, when caught up in the constraints of communication and the pressures of culture³⁹—in figures as "bound," as secondary as those of language (and which classical semiology, with its linguistic inspiration, is in a good position to grasp). But it is also true, as Jean Francois Lyotard has rightly insisted,⁴⁰ that the image resists being swallowed up whole in these logical assemblages and that something within it has the tendency to escape. In every "language," the characteristics inher-

ent in the physical medium of the signifier [*matière du signifiant*], as I have noted at another level in *Language and Cinema*,⁴¹ have a certain influence on the type of logic tending to inform the texts (this is the problem of "specificities" considered at the plane of formal configurations). The unconscious neither thinks nor discourses; it figures itself forth in images; conversely, every image remains vulnerable to the attraction, varying in strength according to the case, of the primary process and its characteristic modalities of concatenation. Language itself, not to be confused with *langue*, often undergoes this attraction, as we see in poetry, and Freud has shown⁴² that dreams or certain symptoms treat representations of words as representations of things. The image, because of its nature, because of its kinship with the unconscious, is a bit more exposed to this attraction. (What is at issue, however, is only a difference of immediacy, and we should be cautious about reinstating on this basis the psychodramatic antagonism between words and images, a great mythic theme of a certain "audio-visual" ideology that forgets the force of social conditionings exerted in common on the different means of expression.)

When we consider more particularly the narrative fiction cinema, which is only one of the various possible cinemas, this kinship of film and dream—a kinship of the signifier—is doubled by a supplementary affinity involving the signified. For it is also characteristic of the dream (and of the phantasy—a point to which we shall return) that it consists of a *story*. Of course there are stories and there are stories. The film story always unfolds clearly (or the obscurity, at least, is always accidental and secondary); it is a *told* story, a story, in short, that implies an action of narration [*récit*].⁴³ The dream story is a "pure" story, a story without an act of narration, emerging in turmoil or shadow, a story that no narrative process has *formed* (deformed), a story from nowhere, which nobody tells to nobody. And nevertheless, still a story: in the dream as in the film there are not only images; there is, clearly or confusedly woven by the images themselves, a succession, whether organized or chaotic, of places, actions, moments, characters.

Thus we shall have to consider more closely the exact nature (also, the limits) of the primary operations floating on the surface of the "secondarized" chain of filmic discourse:⁴⁴ a formidable job with research requirements that forbid taking it on here, where we would like to be content with marking its place at the heart of a vaster problem, that of the cinematographic fiction in relation to waking and sleep. Nonetheless, we must say straight off that certain of the most specific, and at the same time the most common, figures of cinematographic expression carry within them, starting with their "technical" and literal definition, something not unrelated to condensation and displacement. To take a single example, the very banality of which gives it an importance neither exceptional nor uncharacteristic, the superimposition and the lap-dissolve⁴⁵—though "redeemed" in the punctuation codes, which weaken what is strange and disquieting in them⁴⁶—rest on mental paths where a certain primary-order unboundness [*déliason*] is maintained. The superimposition characteristically effects a sort of equivalence between two distinct objects: a partial equivalence, simply discursive and metaphoric

(a "bringing together," which the act of expression [*l'énonciation*] produces) as long as the spectator, in a process smacking of rationalization, secondarizes it at the same moment that he reads it (that he binds it). A more profound equivalence, an authentic equivalence, in a total sense, insofar as the spectator also receives it in a more immediately affective fashion. Between these two contradictory and simultaneous types of reception, whose mode of psychical coexistence I have elsewhere tried to explain,⁴⁷ the relation is one of cleaving and denial. Somewhere within him the spectator takes the superimposition seriously; he sees in it something other than a familiar and neutralized artifice of filmic discourse; he *believes* in the real equivalence of the two objects superimposed on the screen (or at least in some magically transitive bond between them). He believes in this more or less: economically, the force belonging to one of the modes of reception is in a variable relation with the force of the other: certain spectators are more censored (or are so more when faced with a given superimposition); certain superimpositions are more convincing, etc. The fact of equivalence remains—equivalence that the film *figures forth* directly, without indicating "like," "such as," or "at the same moment . . .," as language would—equivalence that thus appears a mixture of condensation and displacement. In the case of the lap-dissolve, which is a superimposition drawn further in the direction of consecutive order (in that one image ends up replacing the other), the primary equivalence of the two motifs includes a bit less condensation and a bit more displacement. But the two figures have this in common: that up to a certain point they put into play the transference of a psychical charge from one object to another (contrary to the tendency of all everyday logic), and that in them can be read in outline (or residue) form the propensity characteristic of the primary process to abolish the very duality of objects, that is to say, to establish, outside the divisions imposed by reality, the short and magical circuits that the impatient wish requires. Thus the fiction film consoles us with common impossibilities.

The study of phenomena of this kind, whether in cinematographic language itself or in the formal operations of a given film, leads us back via one of its extremities to the unconscious of the filmmaker (or of the cinema); this is the side of the "sender." But the other extremity (the "receiver," that is to say, the filmic state) is equally interesting to consider. What is remarkable in this regard is that the appearance in the film of these more or less primary figures generally provokes little astonishment and confusion in the spectator. That they may be immediately subsumed in a secondary narrative logic does not explain everything; neither does historical familiarization or acculturation to the cinema. They retain, it would seem, enough of the unfamiliar for us to have anticipated a more immediate, profound, and widespread rejection (for there are traces of it among certain spectators in relation to certain films), a rejection capable of taking diverse forms: explicit protest, laughing as a polyvalent defense and all-purpose protection, aggression perpetrated inwardly against the film (or, on the other hand, among depressives, extreme perplexity), the strong impression of illogicality. None of these reactions is unexampled but no more is any the rule, and even when

they are produced, it is most often, as we said earlier, in response to the phantasy content of the film and not to what remains of the primary process in filmic expression as such in certain of its operations capable of conveying more than one content. This is because, to tell the truth, it is characteristic of these operations in the machinery of fiction to be self-effacing, to work for the benefit of the diegesis, to "inflate" belief and activate its hold on the emotions at the cost of their own abasement, in accord with a process of *belief transference* to which I have devoted a separate study.⁴⁸ This factor is one of those that permit us to understand why the rejection of primary configurations is not more frequent, why the film object does not surprise the spectator, why it is not an intrinsic scandal.

We now see that the filmic state combines within itself two contrary and yet convergent processes leading by inverse routes to the same result, that absence of astonishment which research should find a little more astonishing. Absence of astonishment because the film is on the whole secondary and the spectator on the whole awake, with the result that they are on an equal footing; but also, insofar as cinematic discourse is perforated by primary emergences, because the spectator is a bit less awake than in other circumstances (the equal footing is maintained then, but on another foot): thus a sort of compromise is created, a middle level of wakefulness, itself institutionalized in the classical cinema, where film and spectator succeed in being regulated one by the other and both by an identical or similar degree of secundarization. The spectator, during the projection, puts himself into a state of lessened alertness (he is at a show; nothing can happen to him); in performing the social act of "going to the movies," he is motivated in advance to lower his ego defenses a notch and not to reject what he would reject elsewhere. He is capable, in a very limited and yet singular measure, of a certain tolerance for the conscious manifestation of the primary process. Undoubtedly, this is not the only case where he is so (there is also alcoholic intoxication, exaltation, etc.). But it is deservedly one of them, with particular conditions not to be found in the others: theatrical situation, presence of a materialized fiction, etc. Among the different regimens of waking, the filmic state is one of those least unlike sleep and dreaming, dreamful sleep.

IV

In trying to specify the relations between the filmic state and the oneiric state, the partial kinships and incomplete differences, we encounter at every step the problem of sleep, its absence, or its intermediate degrees. Thus we are inevitably led to introduce a new term into the analysis, the daydream, which, like the filmic state and unlike the dream, is a waking activity. When in French we wish more clearly to distinguish the dream [*rêve*] and the daydream [*rêverie*], we call the latter, in a stiff and in fact redundant syntagm, the "waking daydream" [*"rêverie éveillée"*]. This is Freud's "Tagtraum," the daytime dream [*rêve de jour*], in short the *conscious phantasy*. (We

know that the phantasy, conscious or unconscious, can also be integrated within a dream whose manifest content it comprises; but in this case, it loses certain characteristics of the phantasy and takes on certain characteristics of the dream; it is therefore the non-oneiric phantasy that is now in question).

The first three parts of this study have already indicated, though in a negative and hollow fashion, some of the features linking the diegetic film to the daydream, for they are often the same ones that separate it from the dream. We shall content ourselves with approaching them from the other direction (necessarily displacing them) and filling them out where necessary.

It is noteworthy, first of all, that the degree and manner of logical coherence of the novelistic film are rather like those of the "petit roman" or "story," which are Freud's terms for the conscious phantasy,⁴⁹ that is to say, that the relation of forces between the secondary revision and the various primary operations is perceptibly the same in both cases. A likeness which does not depend, as we might first suppose, on the fact that the film and the daydream are both conscious productions, since the dream is so too and yet is much less logical. It is not, therefore, the specific coefficient of coming-to-consciousness (consciousness in its descriptive, not topographical, sense) which intervenes here; coming-to-consciousness, or its absence, is an exponent affecting the final product of a psychical process, whereas the relative resemblance of the film and the daydream can be understood only at the level of the modes of production. Not that these modes are identical in the two cases. But we shall see that through their very difference they succeed in reconverging, at least with respect to the final degree of secondary coherence.

If film is a logical construction, it is because it is the product of men awake, filmmakers as well as spectators, whose mental operations are those of the conscious and preconscious. These operations therefore constitute the psychical agency which we can consider as directly producing the film. Although the driving force of the psychical processes in general, among them the making and viewing of films, is always of an unconscious order, there still exists an important difference between such cases as the symptom or the dream, where the primary mechanisms work in a relatively open way, and those where they are by contrast more completely hidden. In the second group appear the clearest of the waking activities, provided they are not too neurotic. To define them (and film along with them) as *preconscious productions* has therefore a sense that is not absolute and requires specification: we mean by this that between the unconscious forces where they take root and the manifest process in which they result (discourse, action, etc.), the interposed transformational relay, that is to say, the preconscious and conscious operations, in the end constitutes the agency that does the greatest share of the work and does it in such a way that the visible result is rather different—rather *distanted* (keeping the word's force as passive participle)—from the original source and from the type of logic belonging to it: thus it is in the ordinary processes of life in society and in the greater part of the productions of culture.

The conscious phantasy—or rather, simply the phantasy in its different con-

scious and unconscious versions, inseparable from each other and grouped in "families"—is rooted in the unconscious in a fashion that is more direct and that follows a shorter circuit. It belongs more to the unconscious system (the unconscious in its topographical sense), even when its manifestations, or certain among them, have access to consciousness, for it is thematically close to the ideational representative of the instinct and energetically close to the instinct's affective representative;⁵⁰ whence its disturbing seductive power when aroused by a film or something else. This kinship with the instinctual sources enters into the very definition of the phantasy flux, with the result that we can see there (in the relative sense stated above) a production of the unconscious. It assuredly is that, but is nonetheless distinguished from other productions of the unconscious, the dream, the symptom, etc.—and this is the second element of the definition—by its internal logic, wherein there appears the inherent mark of the preconscious and of the secondary process: the phantasy is directly organized as a relatively coherent story (or scene) whose actions, characters, places, and sometimes moments are connected and do not disclaim the logic of the narrative or representative arts (we know that "logical dreams"⁵¹ are often those whose manifest content, in whole or in part, coincides with a whole phantasy or a whole segment of a phantasy). Thus, although phantasy is always near the unconscious by virtue of its content, and although the conscious phantasy is only a slightly more distant version, a budding prolongation (a "derivative," as we say) of the unconscious phantasy, nonetheless phantasy (even in its submerged parts) always carries the more or less clear imprint of the preconscious in its modes of "composition" and formal layout; this is why Freud saw it as a sort of hybrid.⁵² This internal duality characterizes the conscious as well as the unconscious manifestations of one and the same seed of phantasy thrust, but the degree of secondariness obviously tends to grow when one of the germinations crosses the threshold of consciousness and thus becomes accessible to the daydream. When the daydream takes hold of it, we can even establish in certain cases a kind of intentional intervention by the subject, which is like the first stage in drafting a film scenario; the daydream is born of a conscious phantasy, already coherent in its manner but often brief, instantaneous, and fleeting in its recognizable and unwished (recognizable because unwished, because always a bit compulsive) intensity; the act of daydreaming as such often tends to consist in artificially prolonging the emergence of the phantasy for a few additional moments, thanks to a rhetorical and narrative amplification which for its part is fully wished and has already the character of diegetic composition. (We see that the daydream and the conscious phantasy are not entirely confounded; rather, the former is the direct prolongation of the latter.)

The filmic flux is more explicit than that of the daydream, *a fortiori* than that of the conscious phantasy. It cannot be otherwise since film supposes a material fabrication that obliges one to choose each element in all the detail of its perceptible appearance, whereas the daydream, a purely mental fabrication, can tolerate more vague and "blank" spaces. But this is a difference of precision, a difference in the degree of realization, one might say, and not in

the degree of secondariness, or in any case much less so than in the difference between the film and the dream. The "little stories" that we tell ourselves somewhat resemble, by virtue of their coherence of the directly diegetic sort, the big stories that story films tell us (whence the enduring success of the latter). It is rare that the narrative line as a whole in a fiction film actually puts one in mind of a dream; it is frequent, even the rule, that it broadly conforms to the *novelistic formula* [*formule romanesque*] characteristic of the daydream, of the "fancy" in Freud's sense (Freud defined the term precisely by reference to artistic works of representation⁵³).

This typological kinship is often doubled by a real filiation of a genetic order, although this more directly causal connection is not indispensable to the resemblance and is less often in evidence. Certain fiction films have more than "the air" of a daydream; they derive directly from the daydreams of their author (here again we meet Freud's "fancy"): films that we call "autobiographical," works of narcissistic filmmakers or young creators particularly full of themselves, show little resistance to the desire to "put everything" into their film;⁵⁴ but this is also true in a more distanced and less adolescent form of narrative films whose explicit *donnée* has nothing autobiographical about it, and, at the limit, of all fiction films, and even others, since no one would produce anything without his phantasies. Nevertheless, when the relation of the work to the phantasy is not established at too manifest a level, it is not any closer or more characteristic than in any other action of life; this is notably the case when the inspiring phantasy is unconscious, so that its mark in the film is considerably transposed (but this can also be the case, by a deliberate step backward, when the phantasy is conscious). We can say therefore that there are indeed films that in this sense do not proceed from their author's phantasies or daydreams.

The degree of secundarization and its essentially diegetic manner are not the only features linking the classical film and the daydream. The filmic state and the conscious phantasy equally suppose a rather similar degree of wakefulness. They are both established at an intermediary point between minimal wakefulness (sleep and dream) and maximal wakefulness, prevailing in the execution of practical tasks actively directed toward a real goal. An intermediary but not median degree, since it is on balance closer to waking, and moreover forms part of it (this is because we conventionally designate as a waking state the whole higher part of the scale of wakefulness together with the totality of its internal degrees). The median degree would be situated lower than that of the daydream or film; it would correspond to certain states which precede or immediately follow sleep in the strict sense of the word.

In the filmic state as in the daydream, perceptual transference stops before its conclusion, true illusion is wanting, the imaginary remains felt as such; just as the spectator knows that he is watching a film, the daydream knows that it is a daydream. Regression is exhausted in both cases before reaching the perceptual agency; the subject does not confuse the representations with perceptions, but clearly maintains their status as representations: mental

representations in the daydream,⁵⁵ and in the film representation of a fictional world through real perceptions (not to speak of true daydreams, mental images recognized as such, accompanying the viewing of the film and embroidered around it; they are never taken for real; on the other hand, the subject sometimes has trouble distinguishing them from the diegesis, but this is precisely because both belong to a rather closely related mode of the imaginary). In all of this, the filmic state and the conscious phantasy clearly belong to waking.

To waking but not to its most characteristic manifestations. It suffices to compare them to other states of waking and notably to those summarized by the word *activity* in its ordinary sense, with its connotation of doing things and moving about. Film viewing, like daydreaming, is rooted in contemplation and not in action. Both suppose a temporary, largely voluntary, change in economy by which the subject suspends his object cathexes or at least renounces opening a real outlet for them, and withdraws for a time to a more narcissistic base (more introverted, to the extent that the phantasies remain concerned with objects),⁵⁶ as sleeping and dreaming cause him to do to a greater degree. Both have a certain power to relax, an attenuated metapsychological equivalent of the refreshing power that belongs to sleep and defines its function. Both are performed in a certain solitude (correlative of the re-narcissification), which circumstances can render delicious or bitter; we know that active participation in a collective task does not encourage daydreaming and that immersion in the filmic fiction (in the "projection," so well named) has the effect, stronger in proportion as the film is pleasing, of separating groups or couples who entered the theater together and sometimes have a certain difficulty reachieving that togetherness when they leave. (People with good personal rapport find it necessary to agree to have a moment of silence here so that the first words they exchange are not jarring: although these words may comment on the film, they mark its end, for they bring with them activity, waking, companionship. This is because in a certain sense one is always alone at the movies, again a little as in sleep.)

Thanks to this relative lowering of wakefulness, the filmic state and the daydream allow the primary process to emerge up to a certain point, which is rather similar in the two cases. We have said earlier what such cinematographic figures owe to a modest step in the direction of regression. The primary power of the superimposition, for example, has something very deadened, very exhausted about it when compared to that of condensation or displacement, its properly oneiric homologues. But if we consider these same operations in the daydream, the degree of belief that they meet with on the subject's part perceptibly diminishes, and thus is brought nearer to that which a film superimposition can arouse. The conscious phantasy superimposes two faces for the fun of it, without believing in their substantial fusion (which is no cause for doubt in the dream), and nevertheless believing in it a little, since the daydream is a step in the direction of dreaming. This divided operation, naive and crafty at the same time, wherein a bit of the wish is reconciled with a bit of reality thanks to a bit of magic, is in the end rather

close to that on which the subject's psychical attention is modeled when he is confronted with a cinematographic superimposition like the traditional one of the faces of lover and beloved.

If the film is akin to the daydream with respect to secundarization and wakefulness, it is separated from it by an irreducible third trait, the materialization, lacking in the daydream and in phantasy generally, of the images and sounds. In this respect the daydream, wherein the representation remains mental, is on the same side as the dream, and the two are jointly opposed to the filmic state. This opposition, already noted in connection with the dream, takes on another sense when it is the daydream with which the film is compared.

The dreaming subject believes that he is perceiving. Passing from the dream to the filmic state, he can only be a loser, and even doubly so: the images are not his; they can therefore displease him, and he believes in them less strongly, despite their objective reality, than he believed in those of his dream, since the power of the latter attained the point of actual illusion. In terms of wish fulfillment, the film is twice inferior to the dream: it is alien, it is felt as "less true."

In relation to the daydream, the balance is shifted. There remains the liability of an external imposition (an imposition, in short), and the subject is in general less satisfied with films that he sees than with daydreams he manufactures. (The case of the filmmaker here differs from that of the spectator; or rather, he is the only spectator for whom the film is not another person's phantasy but an externalized prolongation of his own.) On the other hand, we do not give more credence to our phantasies than to the fiction of the film, since true illusion is not to be had in either case; the affective benefit offered by the film is therefore not inferior on this point to that of the daydream. It is a question in both cases of a pseudo-belief, a consented-to simulation. Thus the material existence of the filmic images (along with all that issues from it: stronger impression of reality, superiority of perceptual precision and therefore of the power of *incarnation*, etc.) helps recover some advantages that compensate more or less completely for the images' immediately alien origin: their profound conformity to one's own phantasy is never guaranteed, but when chance permits this to a sufficient degree, the satisfaction—the feeling of a little miracle, as in the state of shared amorous passion—results in a sort of *effect*, rare by nature, which can be defined as the temporary rupture of a quite ordinary solitude. This is the specific joy of receiving from the external world images that are usually internal, images that are familiar or not very far from familiar, of seeing them inscribed in a physical location (the screen), of discovering in this way something almost realizable in them, which was not expected, of feeling for a moment that they are perhaps not inseparable from the tonality which oftenest attends them, from that common and accepted yet slightly despairing impression of the impossible.

In the social life of our age, the fiction film enters into functional competition with the daydream, a competition in which it is sometimes victorious

by virtue of the trump cards of which we have just spoken. This is one of the sources of "cinophilia" in its ardent forms, the *love of the cinema*, a phenomenon requiring explanation, especially when we recognize the intensity it can attain among certain people. By contrast, the competition between film and dream as techniques of affective satisfaction is less lively, less sharp: it still exists, since both play this role, but they play it at more widely differing moments and according to less similar regimens of illusion: the dream responds more to the pure wish in its original madness; the film is a more reasonable and measured satisfaction wherein enters a larger share of compromise. Filmic pleasure itself, in order to establish itself as pleasure, requires many prior assumptions: that this is only the cinema, that other people exist, etc. (The dream does not make so many of these.) Thus the neurotic in a crisis often abandons movie theaters when previously he frequented them: what he sees there is already too remote from him, fatiguing, tiresome. (This occasional cinephobia, not to be confused with calm and permanent abstentions, is a degree more neurotic than the badly controlled cinophilia of which it is the reversal; in cinophilia, the incipient hypertrophy of introversion and narcissism would remain hospitable to external contributions, which the crisis renders suddenly unbearable.)

If the film and the daydream are in more direct competition than the film and the dream, if they ceaselessly encroach upon each other, it is because they occur at a point of adaptation to reality—or at a point of regression, to look at it from the other direction—which is nearly the same; it is because they occur at the same *moment* (same moment in ontogeny, same moment in the diurnal cycle): the dream belongs to childhood and the night; the film and the daydream are more adult and belong to the day, but not midday—to the evening, rather.

V

The filmic state which I have tried to describe is not the only possible one; it does not include all of the rather diverse *visées de conscience* that a person can adopt before a film. Thus the proposed analysis would badly suit the frames of mind of a film critic or a semiologist actively researching, in the course of a professional viewing (shot-by-shot study, etc.), certain well specified features of the film, putting himself by this means into a state of maximal wakefulness, a work state; it is clear that perceptual transference, regression, and degree of belief in his case will be much weaker, and that he will perhaps retain something of this mind-set when he goes to the movies for fun. What is in question in this case is no longer the filmic state which cinema as an institution in its ordinary functioning plays upon, anticipates, foresees, and favors. The film analyst by his very activity places himself in this respect outside the institution.

Moreover, the preceding description concerns only certain geographical forms of the institution itself, those that are valid in Western countries. The

cinema as a whole, insofar as it is a social fact, and therefore also the psychological state of the ordinary spectator, can take on appearances very different from those to which we are accustomed. We have only attempted *one* ethnography of the filmic state, among others remaining to be done (for which Freudian notions would be perhaps less helpful and certainly less directly useful, since they were established, despite their pretension to universality, in an observational field with cultural limits). There are societies where the cinema scarcely exists, as in certain regions of black Africa outside the cities; there are also civilizations which like ours are great producers and consumers of fiction films (e.g., Egypt, India, Japan, etc.) but where the social context is sufficiently remote from ours to forbid us, in the absence of a specialized study, any extrapolated proposition with respect to the significance that the very act of *going to the movies* can assume there.

A third limitation, often recalled along the way: the only films in question were narrative (or fictional, or diegetic, or novelistic, or representational, or traditional, or classical, etc.—terms which we purposely used as provisional synonyms but which from other points of view must be distinguished). Most films shot today, good or bad, original or not, “commercial” or not, have as a common characteristic that they tell a story; in this measure they all belong to one and the same *genre*, which is, rather, a sort of “super-genre” [*“sur-genre”*], since certain of its internal divisions (not all: there are narrative but unclassifiable films) themselves constitute genres: the Western, the gangster film, etc. The real meaning of these films, especially the most complex of them, is not reducible to this anecdote, and one of the most interesting modes of assessment is precisely that which, when faced with a story film, bases itself on everything that outruns the story. However, a narrative kernel remains present in nearly all films—in those where it constitutes the main point as in many others where the main point, even if located elsewhere, hinges on it in various fashions: on it, under it, around it, in its gaps, sometimes in opposition to it—and this fact itself must also be understood, this very broad historical and social collusion of cinema and narrative.⁵⁷ It serves no purpose constantly to repeat that the “only interesting cinema,” the only cinema that one likes, is precisely that which does not tell a story: an attitude common in certain groups and not without its avant-gardist aestheticism, precipitate revolutionism, or desire for originality at any price. Can we imagine a historian with republican sympathies who for this reason would judge the study of absolute monarchy useless?

Here again we encounter the need for a *criticism* of the diegetic cinema. “Criticism” in a sense neither necessarily nor uniformly polemical, since this cinema, like every cultural formation, is composed of important works side by side with mass-produced goods. Critical analysis of the traditional film consists above all in refusing to see it as the natural outcome of some universal and timeless essence or vocation of the cinema, in making it appear as one cinema among other possible ones, in unmasking the objective conditions of possibility of its functioning, which are masked by its very functioning, *for* its very functioning.

This machinery has economic and financial gears, directly sociological

gears, and also psychological gears. At the center of the latter, we always encounter afresh the impression of reality, the classical problem of filmological research. In an article (already cited) which owed its title to this,⁵⁸ I attacked the problem, in 1965, with the tools of phenomenology and experimental psychology. This is because the impression of reality results partly from the physical (perceptual) nature of the cinematographic signifier: images obtained by photographic means and therefore particularly "faithful" ["*fidèles*"] in their function as effigies, presence of sound and movement that are already a bit more than effigies since their "reproduction" on the screen is as rich in sensory features as their production outside a film, etc. The impression of reality is founded, then, on certain objective resemblances between what is perceived in the film and what is perceived in daily life, resemblances still imperfect but less so than they are in most of the other arts. However, I remarked also that the similarity of the stimuli does not explain everything, since what characterizes, and even defines, the impression of reality is that it works to the benefit of the imaginary and not of the material which represents it (that is, precisely, the stimulus): in theater this material is even more "similar" ["*ressemblant*"] than in movies, but this is surely why the theatrical fiction has a lesser psychological power as reality than the film diegesis. Consequently, the impression of reality can be studied not only by comparison with perception but also by relation to the various kinds of fictional perceptions, the chief of which, apart from the representational arts, are the dream and the phantasy. If cinematographic fabulations are endowed with this sort of credibility, which has struck every author and compels observation, this is at once, and contradictorily, because the psychical situation in which they are received involves certain features of reality and certain features of the daydream and the dream, which also belong to the pseudo-real. The theoretical contribution of psychology (study of perception, study of the conscious), with its extensions into classical filmology, ought therefore to be complemented by that of metapsychology, which can play a part, like linguistics (which it does not supplant), in renovating filmology.

To the extent that the impression of reality is linked to the perceptual features of the signifier, it characterizes all films, diegetic or not, but insofar as it participates in the *fiction-effect*, it belongs to narrative films and to them alone. It is before such films that the spectator adopts a very particular *visée de conscience* which is confounded neither with that of the dream, nor with that of the daydream, nor with that of real perception, but which retains a little of all three, and is installed, so to speak, at the center of the triangle that they mark out: a type of looking whose status is at once hybrid and precise and which establishes itself as the strict correlative of a certain kind of looked-at object (the psychoanalytic problem thus hinges on a historical problem). Faced with this cultural object, which is the fiction film, the impression of reality, the impression of the dream, and the impression of the daydream cease to be contradictory and mutually exclusive, as they are ordinarily, in order to enter into new relations wherein their usual distinctness, while not exactly annulled, admits an unprecedented configuration leaving

room at once for straddling, alternating balance, partial overlapping, recalibration, and ongoing circulation among the three: authorizing, in sum, a sort of central and moving zone of intersection where all three can "reencounter" each other on a singular territory, a confused territory which is common to them and yet does not abolish their distinctness. A reencounter which is possible only around a pseudo-real (a diegesis): around a *place* consisting of actions, objects, persons, a time and a space (a place similar in this respect to the real), but which presents itself of its own accord as a vast simulation, a nonreal real; a "milieu" with all the structures of the real and lacking (in a permanent, explicit fashion) only the specific exponent of real being. The fiction thus possesses the strange power of momentarily reconciling three very different regimens of consciousness, for the very characteristics that define the fiction have the effect of driving it, hammering it like a wedge into the narrowest and most central of their interstices: the diegesis has something of the real since it imitates it, something of the daydream and the dream since they imitate the real. The *novelistic* as a whole, with its cinematographic extensions, enriched and complicated by auditory and visual perception (absent in the novel), is nothing other than the systematic exploitation of this region of reencounters and manifold passages.

If films which are not *at all* narrative (there are in fact rather few of these) should one day become more numerous and persuasive, the first effect of this evolution would be to dismiss, at a single stroke, the threefold play of reality, dream, and phantasy, and therefore the unique mixture of these three mirrors through which the filmic state is now defined, a state that history will sweep up in its transformations as it does all the formations of culture.

ÉCOLE PRATIQUE DES HAUTES ÉTUDES,
PARIS

(Translated by Alfred Guzzetti)

NOTES

1 For example, in the villages or small towns of countries like France or Italy.

2 [Diegesis is Metz's term for the fictional world depicted in a narrative film. It is, as he writes in *Film Language*, tr. Michael Taylor (New York, 1974), p. 98, "the sum of a film's denotation: the narration itself, but also the fictional space and time dimensions implied in and by the narrative, and consequently the characters, the landscape, the events, and other narrative elements, in so far as they are considered in their denoted aspect." Tr.]

3 [Economic conditions are those relating to the quantifiable instinctual energy in the psychical processes. Freud's metapsychology also includes the topographical, consisting either of the conscious and preconscious, or id, ego, and superego; and the dynamic, consisting of conflicts and interactions of forces. For more complete definitions of these and other Freudian terms from a French perspective, see J. Laplanche and J.-B. Pontalis, *The Language of Psychoanalysis*, tr. Donald Nicholson-Smith (New York, 1973). Tr.]

4 Freud, "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *The Standard*

Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud (London, 1953-73), XIV, 226-27. Hereafter cited as *Standard Ed.*

5 [In Metz's terminology, film is described materially as the combination of a *bande sonore* ("sound track") and *bande-images* ("image track"). Tr.]

6 "Institution of the ego," in Freud's term ("A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 233-34).

7 Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 488-89.

8 [*Visée* or *visée de conscience* (roughly, "orientation of consciousness"), a term borrowed from Sartre, is that which is by definition opposed to the content of consciousness. As Metz explains, "If I see an apple in front of me and if I imagine an apple, the content of consciousness is the same in the two cases, but there are two different *visées*: in the first case, I '*visé*' the apple as present (this is what we call perception), in the second as absent (this is what we call imagination, hope, regret, desire, etc.). I can also '*visé*' it as past (this is memory). The principal *visées* of consciousness (for the same content) are: present-real (to perceive), past-real (to remember), past-unreal (to regret), present-unreal (to imagine), future-real (to decide), future-unreal (to hope), etc." Tr.]

9 Freud, "On Narcissism: An Introduction," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 95-97; *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 572.

10 *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 571-72; "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 224-25.

11 "On Narcissism: An Introduction," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 95-97.

12 *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 579-80.

13 Freud, "Mourning and Melancholia," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 252-53; "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 225.

14 *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 572.

15 In *Film Language*, pp. 217-18, I tried to analyze, under the heading "potential sequence," one of these constructions, which appears in Jean-Luc Godard's film, *Pierrot le Fou*. [For a critique of Metz's analysis, see my essay "Christian Metz and the Semiology of the Cinema," *Journal of Modern Literature*, 3 (Apr. 1973), 302ff. Tr.]

16 "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams" in its entirety and esp. *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 234-35.

17 Jean Louis Baudry, "Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus," *Film Quarterly*, 28, No. 2 (Winter 1974-75), 39-47.

18 Jacques Lacan, "Le stade du miroir comme formateur de la fonction du je," *Écrits* (Paris: Seuil, 1966), pp. 93-100, tr. by Jean Roussel as "The Mirror-Phase as Formative of the Function of the 'I,'" *New Left Review* 51 (Sept.-Oct. 1968), 71-77. [Lacan's term refers to a developmental phase occurring approximately between the ages of six to eighteen months in which the infant, though still helpless and uncoordinated, anticipates mastery of his body; this imaginative apprehension of bodily unity is indicated by his joy in perceiving his reflection in a mirror. Tr.]

19 "On Narcissism: An Introduction," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 82-83; "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 222-23.

20 Freud, *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis*, *Standard Ed.*, XVI, 375-77.

21 [*Coup* being the word for a "cut," *découpage*, a word with no English equivalent, refers to the division of the action into shots. Tr.]

22 "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 229-30.

23 *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 543-44.

24 *Ibid.*, pp. 533-49; "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 226-28.

- 25 *The Interpretation of Dreams*, esp. *Standard Ed.*, V, 561.
- 26 "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 226.
- 27 *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 543; "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 230-31; "The Ego and the Id," *Standard Ed.*, XIX, 19-20.
- 28 *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 543-44.
- 29 *Ibid.*
- 30 According to the psychologist Henri Wallon, the sum of a spectator's impressions during the projection of a film is divided into two clearly separated and unequally weighted series, which he calls respectively "visual series" ("diegetic series" would be a better term) and "proprioceptive series" (the sense, persisting in a weakened form, of one's own body and therefore of the real world). Cf. "L'acte perceptif et le cinéma," *Revue internationale de Filmologie* (Paris), No. 13 (Apr.-Jun. 1953).
- 31 ["On the Impression of Reality in the Cinema," *Film Language*, pp. 3-15. Tr.]
- 32 "Une expérience sur la compréhension du film," *Revue internationale de Filmologie*, 2, No. 6, 160.
- 33 [In Freud the primary process is associated with the unconscious and the pleasure principle, the secondary process with the conscious and preconscious and the reality principle. Secondary revision reorders a dream so as to reduce its appearance of absurdity and disconnectedness and give it a coherence like that of the daydream. Tr.]
- 34 "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 229; *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 575.
- 35 *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 592-95, 489-90.
- 36 *Ibid.*, pp. 498-99, 575-76.
- 37 "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 233-34.
- 38 In particular in *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 431-33, 528-29 (concerning psychotic discourses), 530-31, 595-96 (concerning condensation), etc.
- 39 On this point see Text 7 ("Au-delà de l'analogie, l'image") of my *Essais sur la signification au cinéma*, Vol. II (Klincksieck, 1973).
- 40 *Discours, figure* (Klincksieck, 1971).
- 41 *Language and Cinema*, tr. Donna Jean Umiker-Sebeok (The Hague, 1974), pp. 161-83, esp. pp. 170-73.
- 42 Freud, "The Unconscious," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 197-99; "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 229; *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, IV, 295-304.
- 43 See *Film Language*, pp. 20-21.
- 44 Research in this direction has already begun; cf. esp. Thierry Kuntzel, "Le travail du film," *Communications* 19 (École Pratique des Hautes Études et Éditions du Seuil, 1972), pp. 25-39.
- 45 [A superimposition looks like a double exposure, although strictly speaking a double exposure is made at the time of shooting and a superimposition at the time of printing. Good examples of superimposition occur toward the end of Pasolini's *Medea*. A lap-dissolve (or simply, a dissolve) consists of the fade-out of one shot superimposed on the fade-in of a new shot. Tr.]
- 46 I made a modest study of these punctuation codes in an article entitled "Ponctuations et démarcations dans le film de diégèse" (rpt. in *Essais sur la signification au cinéma*, II, 111-37).
- 47 In "Trucage et cinéma," *Essais sur la signification au cinéma*, II, 173-92.
- 48 *Ibid.*

49 Freud also employs others: the English word "daydream," "rêve" in the French sense of a daytime dream, that is to say, precisely a "rêverie" (*The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 491-92 and n. 2 on p. 491). [Freud glosses the German *Tagtraum* with the French "petits romans" and the English "stories." Tr.]

50 ["Ideational representative" and "affective representative" are Freud's terms for the delegates of the instinct in the respective spheres of ideas and affect. Tr.]

51 *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 490-92.

52 Or "half breed" ("The Unconscious," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 190-91). In the same passage Freud insists on the fact that the phantasy stock remains always unconscious, even if certain of the formations extending it have access to consciousness. In *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 491-92, the author stresses that the conscious phantasy and the unconscious phantasy strongly resemble each other in their internal characteristics and structures; their difference is one of content only; the unconscious phantasies are those in which the wish is expressed in a clearer or more urgent fashion and which have undergone repression of this fact.

53 *Introductory Lectures on Psycho-analysis*, *Standard Ed.*, XVI, 376: the artist draws his inspiration from his "day-dreams"; "he understands, too, how to tone them down so that they do not easily betray their origin from proscribed sources. Furthermore, he possesses the mysterious power of *shaping some particular material* until it has become a faithful image of his phantasy . . ." (my italics).

54 [Possibly an allusion to Godard's article, "One Should Put Everything into a Film," *Godard on Godard*, ed. Jean Narboni and Tom Milne (New York, 1972), pp. 238-39. Tr.]

55 "The Ego and the Id," *Standard Ed.*, XIX, 20; "A Metapsychological Supplement to the Theory of Dreams," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 230-31; *The Interpretation of Dreams*, *Standard Ed.*, V, 542-43.

56 "On Narcissism: An Introduction," *Standard Ed.*, XIV, 74; Freud reproaches Jung for using the notion of introversion in too vague and general a sense; it should be reserved for cases where the libido has abandoned the real object for the phantasy object but has remained directed toward an object [rather than toward the ego]. When the libido flows back from the object into the ego and no longer into the imaginary object, we can speak of (secondary) narcissism. Along the path of disengagement from the object, narcissism represents a step beyond introversion.

57 Cf. *Film Language*, pp. 44-49 and 185-227 ("The Modern Cinema and Narrativity").

58 "On the Impression of Reality in the Cinema," *Film Language*, pp. 3-15.

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New Literary History, Vol. 8, No. 1, Readers and Spectators: Some Views and Reviews.
(Autumn, 1976), pp. 75-105.

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¹⁷ **Ideological Effects of the Basic Cinematographic Apparatus**

Jean-Louis Baudry; Alan Williams

Film Quarterly, Vol. 28, No. 2. (Winter, 1974-1975), pp. 39-47.

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